agro processing industries set up to process, preserve and package fruits and vegetables.

(ii) Excise duty of 16% on dairy machinery has been reduced to zero for promotion of dairy processing industries.

(iii) Excise duty on food grade hexane used in edible oil industry has been reduced from 32% to 16%.

(iv) Excise duty of Rs. 1.00 per kg. on refined edible oil and Rs. 125 per kg. on vanaspati abolished.

(v) Customs duty on refrigerated vans reduced from 20% to 10%.

(vi) Custom duty on packaging machines reduced from 15 per cent to 5 per cent.

(vii) Custom duty on Vanaspati increased to 80%.

(viii) Excise duty on condensed milk, ice cream preparations of meat, fish and poultry, pectins, pasta and yeast to be fully exempt.

(ix) Excise duty on ready-to-eat packaged foods and instant food mixes, like dosa and idli mixes, reduced from 16 per cent to 8 percent.

(x) Excise duty on aerated drinks has been reduced from 24 per cent to 16 percent.

(xi) Excise duty on packaging paper has been reduced from 16 per cent to 12 per cent.

Food processing industries are both in registered and unregistered sectors. Therefore, the precise information regarding number of such industries is not centrally maintained.

Incentives to Food Processing Sector

3801. DR. VIJAY MALLYA: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are providing incentives to food processing

sector by way of better infrastructure, early completion of irrigation projects, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Government are aiming at a better farm sector growth for the rabi season as foodgrains prospects in the Kharif season is not satisfactory;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether Government had held discussion with the farm sector representatives recently; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAI): (a) The Ministry of Food Processing Industries, under its plan schemes, provides financial assistance for overall development of the Food Processing Industry including for provision of food processing related infrastructure *viz.* food parks, packaging centers, value added centres, Irradiation Centres, cold chain facilities, abattoirs etc. The financial assistance under plan schemes is in the form of Grant in aid and is upto 25% in general areas and upto 33.33% in difficult areas subject to a maximum of Rs. 4.00 Crores in case of Food Parks; Rs. 2.00 Crore in case of Packaging Centres; Rs. 75 lakhs in case of Cold Chain facilities; Rs. 5.00 Crores for irradiation Centres, Rs. 4.00 crore in case of modernized Abattoirs. The Ministry does not set up projects on its own.

(b) to (e) The total foodgrains production was 210.01 Million Tonnes during 2005-2006 (3rd advance estimates) as against 198.36 Million Tonnes during 2004-05. During 2004-05, monsoon rainfall was deficient by 13% causing decrease in Foodgrains production. For increasing production of foodgrains etc., Ministry of Agriculture is operating schemes like Integrated Cereal Development Programme, Integrated Pest Management Programme, Integrated Scheme of oilseeds, Pulses, Oil Palm and Maize.

The Ministry of Agriculture interacts with the States and Union Territories on a regular and institutionalized basis to assess their requirements and support them under various schemes/programmes.

Zonal inputs Conferences and National Conferences on Agriculture prior to the commencement of Kharif and Rabi seasons are organized. Crop production strategy has been discussed by the Agriculture Ministry with State Governments during the National Conference on Agriculture Campaign for Kharif in February, 2006.

Appointment of Chairmen of Sanskrit Vidyalayas/Vidyapeeths

†3802. SHRI BHAGWATI SINGH: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of guidelines for appointing the Chairman of Sanskrit Vidyalayas/Vidyapeeths;

(b) whether appointing the learned individuals only as Chairman has been the policy in this regard;

(c) if so, the number of Vidyalayas/Vidyapeeths wherein the persons other than Sanskrit scholars have been appointed as Chairman; and

(d) the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M.A.A. FATMI): (a) Sanskrit Vidyalayas/Vidyapeeths do not have the post of Chairman.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Teacher-student ratio in DCE

3803. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Delhi College of Engineering has not been able to meet the requirement of teacher-student ratio as laid down by All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE);

(b) the number of students on the college rolls as on 1st April, 2006 and the actual number of teachers (excluding post graduate and Ph.D. students engaged in teaching work) as against the sanctioned strength; and

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.